are released in a phased manner throughout the country depending upon the LPG availability, waiting list, slack available with the distributors and their viability. Government have a plan to release 1 crore LPG (domestic) connections throughout the country to liquidate the waiting list existing with the LPG distributors of Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies as on 1.12.1999, in all the States including Andhra Pradesh, by the end of year 2000. Government have also allowed release of 10 lakh LPG connections in the rural area of Andhra Pradesh under Deepam Scheme. Further, Oil Companies including Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), have been authorised to open extension counters in the rural areas upto 30 kilometers radius to release the new connections in rural and tribal areas in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

Low Ratio of LPG Agencies to Population in Eastern States

3035. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the States in Eastern Region like Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal stand for below with regard to the ratio of LPG agencies for one lakh population in comparison to all major States;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the special steps Government propose to take to bring these States at par with all India level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) to (c) As per the existing policy, the following criteria are adopted for setting up economically viable LPG distributorships in different parts of the country including the States of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal;

(i) All urban locations with a population of 10,000 and above by including potential of adjoining villages falling within the radius of 15 Kms.

(ii) Urban locations having population of 5,000 and above taking into account the potential of adjoining villages falling within 15 Kms radius.

(iii) Cluster of villages, within 15 Kms radius of nucleus villages having a population of 10,000 and above.

(iv) Villages within 15 Kms radius around towns having population of 1 lakh and above.

As on 14,2000, there were 231, 111 and 341 LPG distributorships in operation and 190, 53 and 113 LPG distributorships are pending for selection through interviews by the Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs) in the States of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal respectively, to meet the demand for LPG.

Decreasing Production in Mumbai High

3036. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production in Mumbai High has been decreasing day-by-day;

(b) if so, the remedial steps proposed; and

(c) whether there is any plan to increase the production level?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) The oil production from Mumbai High oilfields during the last three years was as under:

(in Million Metric Tonnes)

Year	Oil Production
1997-98	12.435
1998-99	11.586
1999-2000	10.151

(b) and (c) In oder to improve the performance of the field and increase the recovery factor, a monitorable action plan has been prepared by the Expert Committee which includes;

(i) Reservoir characterisation for better understanding of the compelxities of the multi-layered reservoir of Bombay High field through the recently acquired 3-D seismic data.

(ii) Drilling of in-fill wells to exploit by passed/undrained parts of the giant field,

(iii) Re-distribution of injection water for improved conformance.

(iv) Re-completion of poor performing wells.

(v) Engaging of reservior consultant of International repute by ONGC for planning the future development strategy to improve the recovery from the field.